

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 8, 9 and 12 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and amend the claims as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of managing a communication network comprising a sub-network having communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts, said hosts being able to exchange data via the sub-network, said communication nodes comprising data and control interfaces for exchanging data and operating commands with hosts to which ~~they~~ said communication nodes are connected, the method comprising the steps of:

transmitting a search signal from a first communication node to a second communication node of the sub-network, said search signal containing information representing technical features of a host to be actuated from said first communication node, the transmission being performed in accordance with instructions from a remote control;  
and

identifying a candidate host, that is connected to said second communication node and that has technical features compatible with the technical features contained in the search signal;

~~starting up said candidate host by means of the control interface of the second communication node to which the candidate host is connected;~~

wherein, ~~based on the result of the starting up~~, if said candidate host proves not to be the host to be actuated, a search signal is transmitted once again in order to continue the search,

whereas, if said host does prove to be the host to be actuated, operating commands are sent to ~~it~~ said candidate host by means of ~~said the~~ control interface of the second communication node, ~~which also interrupts and~~ the search is interrupted.

2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein if the data interface of the candidate host is adapted to exchange analogue data signals, then the compatibility of the technical features contained in the search signal is determined with regard to the technical features of ~~said the~~ data interface of the candidate host.

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the steps of transmitting[[,]] and identifying ~~and starting up~~ are repeated until the identification of two hosts that do prove to be the hosts to be actuated, in order to put said two hosts into communication.

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 3, wherein the two hosts put into communication are connected to the same communication node.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A communication node that forms part of a communication network comprising a sub-network having communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts able to exchange data via the sub-network, said node comprising:

at least one data interface for connection to a host to exchange signals;

at least one control interface to transmit operating commands to the host;

and

a unit for supplying signals representing ~~these~~ the operating commands received from at least one other ~~nodes~~ node to said control interface, wherein said unit supplies the signals ~~based on~~ if the data interface connected to the host has technical features identified in a search signal received from another node, and wherein, if the data interface connected to the host does not have the technical features identified in a search signal received from another node, said unit transmits the search signal once again on the sub-network.

7. (Currently Amended) A communication node that forms part of a communication network comprising a sub-network having communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts to exchange data via the sub-network, said node comprising:

at least one receiver to receive operating commands intended for any host in the network; and

a unit to produce signals representing ~~these~~ the operating commands and being transmitted to other nodes, wherein said unit produces the signals based on a

technical feature of the host to transmit a search signal once again when said technical feature is not identified in the search signal.

8. and 9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) The communication ~~network~~ node according to claim [[9]] 6, wherein said data represent audio-visual information.

11. (Currently Amended) A ~~data~~ computer-readable storage medium on which is stored ~~means, which can be read by a computer or a microprocessor, storing instructions of a computer~~ executable program, wherein the program implements ~~the~~ a method according to claim 1 of managing a communication network comprising a sub-network having communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts, said hosts being able to exchange data via the sub-network, said communication nodes comprising data and control interfaces for exchanging data and operating commands with hosts to which said communication nodes are connected, the method comprising the steps of:

transmitting a search signal from a first communication node to a second communication node of the sub-network, said search signal containing information representing technical features of a host to be actuated from said first communication node, the transmission being performed in accordance with instructions from a remote control;  
and

identifying a candidate host, that is connected to said second communication node and that has technical features compatible with the technical features contained in the search signal;

wherein, if said candidate host proves not to be the host to be actuated, a search signal is transmitted once again in order to continue the search,

whereas, if said host does prove to be the host to be actuated, operating commands are sent to said candidate host by means of the control interface of the second communication node, and the search is interrupted.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A communication node that forms part of a communication network comprising a sub-network consisting of communication nodes interconnected by links conveying signals, and a plurality of hosts being able to exchange data via the sub-network, said node comprising:

comparing means for comparing technical features indicated in a received search signal with technical features of a host to which said node is connected; and

a control interface that starts up and operates said host based on a comparison result by the comparing means and transmits the search signal once again on the sub-network when the comparing means determines that the technical features indicated in the received search signal are different from the technical features of the host.

14. (Previously Presented) The communication node according to Claim 13, further comprising:

at least one data interface for connecting a host to exchange analog signals and to receive operation commands from said control interface; and

a unit for supplying said control interface with received signals which represent these operating commands.

15. (Currently Amended) A communication node that forms part of a communication network comprising a sub-network consisting of communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts to exchange data via the sub-network, said node comprising:

means for transmitting to all nodes in the network a search signal containing information representing technical features of a host to be actuated;

means for determining when the search signal is transmitted again on the sub-network; and

means for sending operating commands to said host to be actuated when the search signal is no longer transmitted again on the sub-network.

16. (Previously Presented) The communication node according to Claim 15, further comprising:

at least one receiver to receive operating commands intended for said host to be actuated; and

a unit to produce signals representing the operating commands.

17. (Currently Amended) A communication apparatus comprising:

a wireless communication means for wirelessly communicating with another wireless communication apparatus;

a wired communication means for communicating with another apparatus;

receiving means for receiving, by said wireless communication means, instruction signals for instructing to search for an apparatus possessing a predetermined technical feature; and

searching means for searching, by said wired communication means, ~~the~~ for an apparatus possessing the predetermined technical features based on the received instruction signal, wherein said searching means comprises:

requesting means for sending a request, through said wired communication means, to a distant apparatus to obtain information on a connected apparatus connected to said distant apparatus, and

continuing searching means for continuing searching for an apparatus possessing the predetermined technical feature, said continuing searching means being activated as a function of a response to said request.

18. (Previously Presented) The communication apparatus according to Claim 17, further comprising controlling means for controlling the apparatus searched by said searching means.

19. (Currently Amended) The communication apparatus according to Claim [[17]] 18, wherein said controlling means operates the searched apparatus by an operating command.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for searching for an apparatus possessing a predetermined technical feature by a communication apparatus, comprising:

a wireless receiving step of wirelessly receiving an instruction signal for instructing to search for an apparatus possessing the predetermined technical feature; and

a searching step of searching for ~~the~~ an apparatus possessing the predetermined technical feature based on the received instruction signal, wherein said searching step comprises:

a requesting step of wirelessly sending a request to a distant apparatus to obtain information on a connected apparatus connected to said distant apparatus; and

a step of continuing searching for an apparatus possessing the technical feature, based on a response to the request.